

AHC Faculty Consultative Committee

February 13, 2001

Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

PRESENT: Timothy Wiedmann (chair), Marc Jenkins, Chris Mueller, Ted Oegema, Jean Forster

REGRETS: Dan Feeney, Stephanie Valberg, Muriel Bebeau, Jim Boulger, Dennis Clohisy

[In these minutes: discussion about AHC Strategic Plan]

Professor Wiedmann convened the meeting and suggested that they spend the duration of the meeting discussing the AHC Strategic Plan and think about those items faculty should initiate and which ones they should be consultative.

Committee members then engaged in a dialog about the relative value of being in an AHC and how the goal of the strategic plan is to focus on excellence. They talked at length as to how to determine whether a plan will work once it has been made. Can we quantify the areas we most value, it was asked, research, education, and outreach?

The conversation then turned to Promotion & Tenure, specifically the 7.1.2 statements and measuring the quality of departments. There was a general sense that the average department has lost its ability to reward people. The University says that it wants the very best faculty but it does not do a very good job of rewarding or retaining them. If we quantify what we value, it can not be done at the expense of cutting others out, one committee member interjected and then added that we need to be responsive to the State and to the community in terms of health conditions. Research and education should be targeted at chronic illness and that is why interdisciplinary is important.

After considerable discussion, the group finally agreed flexible benchmarks were needed to measure what is valued, including but not limited to such things as the influence of scholarship on peers. One member raised the question as to how weaknesses could be measured if strengths could not. There doesn't seem to be an accurate measure for quality, one committee member stated. Each department should develop criteria on which to judge its faculty. It would provide an opportunity for faculty to decide how they want to be measured and would the process to develop from the bottom up, committee members agreed. Committee members thought the notion of developing criteria and benchmarks would be a useful discussion for the faculty to have.

Committee members will talk with SVP Cerra about what the administration is doing with respect to the strategic plan at the February 28 meeting.

Professor Wiedmann adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Vickie Courtney